

Protect Our Pensions LGPS campaign



a million
voices
for
public
services

13 February 2012

LGPS Issue no. 13

NEGOTIATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OVER THE LGPS

Newsletter number 13 brings you up to date with negotiations and discussions over the LGPS.

How are the talks going?

The LGPS Project Team has been meeting every Monday since the Service Groups gave their 'go ahead' for discussions within the framework of the principles agreed with the Local Government Association in December. The Project Board, which oversees progress in the talks, has met fortnightly on Wednesdays – in line with the Project Plan. Don't forget - you can see the Project Plan at - <http://www.lgps.org.uk/lge/core/page.do?pagelId=15431012>.

The Project Team has been keen to ensure that discussions take place within a clear understanding of the scheme membership, current costs of the LGPS and the assumptions used by the Government Actuaries Department (GAD) and the individual fund actuaries when valuing the overall 'model fund' and in the triennial valuations at individual fund level. This has led to a slight delay in the timetable, but we are now getting information.

Data from the 2010 fund valuations shows that 72% of LGPS members are women and that 60% of all LGPS members are women earning less than £25,000 a year, alongside 16.5% of men – an indication of low pay in local government.

The Project Team talks are currently focussed on the 'big ticket' items – the nature of the future scheme from 2014, the accrual and revaluation rates, protection and major benefits.

Unite back on board

Unite has re-joined the negotiations on the basis of the agreed Principles.

Administration and Governance Working Groups

Alongside the Project Team, the Administration and Governance Working Groups are looking at important and related issues. So far they have met once, but will be meeting regularly.

The Admin Working Group has been looking at issues such as the definition of pensionable pay, multiple employments, part-time working and vesting periods.

The Governance Working Group is looking at the critical issue of how to make the LGPS more accountable and transparent and ensure that the scheme works in the best interests of you its members.

Timetable....

As you will see from the Project Plan for the negotiations, the period from 12 March to 20 April has been designated as the consultation period over the new scheme for unions. UNISON is committed to an all-member ballot on the final LGPS proposals. We have started preparing a possible timetable. Service Groups will meet prior to the ballot commencing to make recommendations.

Recruiting Contacts and Stewards

There is still a massive opportunity to organise and recruit members and stewards to UNISON. We need more and more members to show the employers that we have got the industrial strength to resist attacks on pensions, pay, jobs and conditions. So carry on organising! Contact Indira Patel, i.patel@unison.co.uk if you would like to be a UNISON pension contact or steward.